

This bill, which amends and strengthens the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act—or PACA for those in the know, is one of the most important Federal agricultural programs for the farmer's of California's central coast. And, Mr. Speaker, it does not cost the taxpayer a dime.

PACA, which was first enacted in 1930, ensures that growers, packers, and produce dealers are paid in a timely manner for their produce without recourse to costly and time-consuming court litigation. Produce dealers and retailers must get a license from the USDA to market produce and their license fees support the program.

PACA is absolutely crucial for perishable fruits and vegetables such as strawberries or lettuce which are only marketable for a short time before they spoil. Almost every dollar of the \$2.4 billion per year in agricultural production in my district is directly tied to the protections in PACA—it is as crucial to central coast specialty crop growers as the wheat and corn programs are to mid-western farmers. So I am very happy that the House is taking up this bill today that ensures a strong PACA program well into the next century.

I want to point out that this legislation includes an important provision for domestic flower growers. Fresh-cut flowers are every bit as perishable as lettuce, grapes, or other produce. But they are not included in PACA's protections. This legislation will require the USDA to work with the flower industry to study the feasibility of including flowers within PACA.

I want to thank the Chairman ROBERTS and Mr. DE LA GARZA for their hard work in bringing this bill to the floor. I also want to thank my Subcommittee Chairman EWING and friend Mr. POMBO for their hard work in bringing all sides of the produce industry together in agreement on this legislation. Finally, I want to thank Mr. Keith Pitts and Ms. Stacey Carry of the Agriculture Committee staff who given so much of their time to move this legislation forward.

So if you enjoy artichokes, strawberries, lettuce, tomatoes, or any other of the 160 fresh produce crops that my district produces, I urge you to support this legislation.

WORKING TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND STRENGTHEN MEDICARE

HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to inform my constituents about the House of Representatives' plan to preserve, protect, and strengthen Medicare.

Unfortunately, some individuals and groups are misstating the facts, thus causing unnecessary anguish and apprehension among our Nation's seniors. In my own district in western New York, I have seen firsthand the anxiety which such statements have caused.

According to the Presidential Medicare Board of Trustees, the Medicare hospital insurance trust fund (Part A) will begin running out of money as early as next year—spending \$1 billion dollars more than it takes in—and will be completely bankrupt by the year 2002.

By law, Medicare is prohibited from making payments for hospital or other health services

if its reserves are depleted. That means if nothing is done now to preserve Medicare, 24 million seniors will be in jeopardy of losing their vital health care coverage.

I am committed to saving the program for all Americans, that includes my mother, who currently is on the program, and my daughter, who will be on it someday. If Congress does not act to save Medicare, the consequences 7 years from now will be catastrophic for all Americans.

Preserving Medicare will not require cuts in the program. Rather, Medicare spending will continue to increase more than private-sector health care spending increases and general inflation rate.

The plan makes Medicare financially safe and secure both now and in the future by simplifying the system and making it easier for seniors to use and understand it. In addition, it gives seniors the same right that Members of Congress have to choose their health care plan.

In our efforts to preserve, protect, and strengthen the Medicare Program, we must eliminate fraud and abuse. We are working with doctors and hospitals to make this happens.

I urge all of my constituents, and all Americans to play a part in the effort to strengthen Medicare. I welcome all comments and suggestions regarding my effort to save this important program.

A SALUTE TO NEW YORK STATE MARITIME COLLEGE PRESIDENT "HOSS" MILLER

HON. THOMAS J. MANTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, last week, leaders of the U.S.-flag Merchant Marine gathered in New York City to pay tribute to retired Navy Rear Admiral Floyd Harry "Hoss" Miller, the president of the New York State Maritime College at Fort Skyler, a branch of the State University of New York. Having served with distinction as president of the New York Maritime College for 15 years, Admiral Miller has decided to move onto new challenges.

The most outstanding tribute to Admiral Miller, was the reaction of his students and colleagues to his announcement. Students at New York State Maritime and, indeed, leaders of the entire New York Maritime community were disappointed to learn that Admiral Miller was leaving. All seemed to agree that there were too many important projects that could not succeed without "Hoss" Miller's guiding hand. During his service as president, Hoss Miller has transformed the Maritime College into a technologically advanced, state-of-the-art institution that is well equipped to train young men and women for the future. While the college has a long legacy of training seafarers, Admiral Miller has broadened the training programs so that Maritime College graduates are prepared to meet the new challenges of a rapidly evolving transportation and trading system.

A member of the New York State Maritime college class of 1953, Admiral Miller possessed a deep commitment to the college. Many in this House, know from personal experience

the strenuous efforts made by Admiral Miller and the other Academy presidents to ensure that the Federal Government honored its commitment to the U.S.-flag merchant marine and maritime education. Although we in Congress seem to have forgotten an important lesson of history, namely that a nation without a maritime fleet is doomed to fail both militarily and economically. Admiral Miller spent his last days in office urging Congress to reexamine this misguided philosophy which neglects maritime education and ignores the unfair maritime practices of our trading partners. Without Admiral Miller's efforts, clearly the State maritime colleges would be in even more perilous condition. Just as he fought hard for his students and his alma mater before Congress, Hoss Miller led the fight in Albany for increased State funding for education.

Prior to joining the college, Admiral Miller had an outstanding record of military service. From his start as a nuclear expert on the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, through his service off the coast of Vietnam as executive officer of the U.S.S. *Bainbridge*, Hoss Miller served with distinction and courage. Upon retiring from the Navy, Admiral Miller sought to serve his Nation in the field of education. He was thrilled by the prospects of preparing a future generation of leaders. Admiral Miller has been tremendously successful in this endeavor and indeed the men and women who trained at the college are part of his legacy.

Although Admiral Miller is leaving the college with a record of accomplishment most would envy, I am certain he will find numerous ways to continue to serve his Nation and his fellow citizens. I and the members of the New York delegation wish you every success in the future.

As we look ahead, I will take this opportunity to welcome Admiral Brown, the new president of the New York Maritime College. Admiral Brown was previously president of the Great Lakes Maritime College and is well known to Members of this House. Admiral Brown, we are pleased to have someone of your stature succeed our friend and we wish you every success in this new position.

PROTECT FUNDING FOR THE ARTS IN THE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I stand in complete opposition to this Interior appropriations bill, which could very well be the death knell for the National Endowments for the Arts. The bill itself terminates arts and humanities funding within 3 years.

Mr. Speaker, arts and culture are a vital part of human existence, and the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the arts must be open to all of our people—and not just the wealthy who can pay \$50 for a concert ticket.

Today, the United States spends only 64 cents per person to support the Arts Endowment, 50 times less than our major allies. In contrast, we spend \$1,138 per person on military expenditures. Why is it that this Congress can lower taxes on the wealthiest people in our country, but cut back on programs which